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imagery analysis report

Soviet Deployment of Late-Model Equipment in Afghanistan (S)

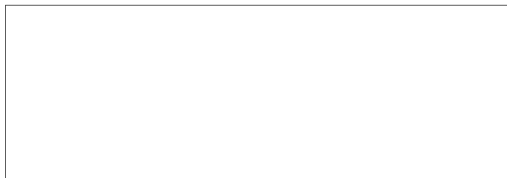
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SOVIET DEPLOYMENT OF LATE-MODEL EQUIPMENT IN AFGHANISTAN (S)

1. (S/D) The Soviets have deployed a wide variety of late-model air, ground, and electronics equipment in Afghanistan. At least 20 different items of late-model equipment have been seen. This equipment includes items such as the RAM J aircraft, which is believed to still be in the research and development (R&D) phase; the mineclearing vehicle M-1979, which has been deployed in limited numbers in the Soviet Army; and the 122mm self-propelled (SP) howitzer M-1974, which has been widely deployed but never used in combat.

2. (S/D) Some of the more significant items of late-model equipment identified in Afghanistan include the RAM J and FORGER aircraft, the BTR-70 armored personnel carrier (APC), the 152mm SP howitzer M-1973, the multiple rocket launcher (MRL) M-1977, the MT-LB SAM transporter-erector-launcher (TEL), and the KH-1 van trailer.

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3. (S/D) The RAM J aircraft is a prototype of a ground attack aircraft. This aircraft has previously been identified in very limited numbers at R&D-associated airfields in the USSR. The RAM J was first identified in Afghanistan when two were observed at Shindand Airfield

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4. (S/D) The FORGER aircraft is a Soviet naval vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) fleet defense aircraft usually observed at Soviet naval air airfields or on Kiev-class guided missile vertical short takeoff and landing (VSTOL) aircraft carriers. Three FORGER aircraft were observed at Shindand Airfield Facilities constructed at the airfield for the FORGER include five aircraft tent shelters, and a VSTOL runway which connects two VTOL pads.

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5 (S/D) The BTR-70 APC (Figure 2) is the latest model APC deployed in the Soviet Army. A BTR-70-equipped motorized rifle regiment was identified at Pol-E Khomri Soviet Deployment Area

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6. (S/D) The 152mm SP howitzer M-1973 (Figure 3) was originally deployed in the Soviet Army in the mid-1970s. This howitzer is widely deployed in divisional artillery regiments. A battery of 152mm SP howitzers was first identified in Afghanistan at Asmar Barracks Brigade and Regiment Headquarters and Supply Depot in the Konar valley in mid-March 1980. a 152mm SP howitzer battalion was observed in an artillery regiment bivouac at Kabul Deployment Area Northwest

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7. (S/D) The MRL M-1977 is a new heavy rocket launcher, usually deployed in army-level rocket launcher regiments. A rocket launcher regiment containing one battalion (18 launchers) of the MRL M-1977 was observed at Shindand Deployment Area

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8. (S/D) The MT-LB SAM TEL (Figure 4) is the latest regimental air defense weapon deployed in the Soviet Army. An MT-LB SAM battery (four TELs) was first observed in Afghanistan at Shindand Deployment Area Several additional regiments equipped with the MT-LB SAM TEL have been identified in Afghanistan since January.

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(Continued p. 5)

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Next 2 Page(s) In Document Denied

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9. (S/D) The KH-1 [redacted] van trailer (Figure 5) has been associated with high-echelon signal units. The exact function of the KH-1 has not yet been determined. The KH-1 was first identified in Afghanistan at Kabul Deployment Area Southwest [redacted]. The Kabul Deployment Area Southwest contains a major Soviet command post.

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10. (S/D) Table 1 lists the items of late-model equipment identified in Afghanistan since the December 1979 invasion.



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